

Iowa Crops & Weather



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Issued April 2, 2007

Vol 07-05

For the month of March 2007

THE PROVERBIAL MARCH

Agricultural Summary: Blizzard conditions state-wide started off the month of March closing most roads in northern and western parts of the state with snow drifts. Many operations remained without power through the first week of March due to the late February ice-storm. Then, near-summer conditions held through most of the month with well-above average temperatures, drenching thunderstorms, and minor flooding. Some producers were able to begin spring field work by the end of March, while others prepared equipment.

At the end of March, the average depth of **snow cover** across Iowa was negligible, just as last year. The average depth of **frost penetration** for the state was less than 1 inch, compared to 13 inches last month and 2 inches last year. **Soil moisture availability** rated zero percent very short, 4 percent short, 73 percent adequate, and 23 percent surplus statewide. **Movement of grain** for the state showed 21 percent no movement, 30 percent light, 40 percent moderate, and 9 percent heavy.

Hog and pig losses for March rated 6 percent below average, 85 percent average, and 9 percent above average. **Cattle and calf losses** were rated 11 percent below average, 79 percent average, and 10 percent above average. **Quality of hay and roughage** for livestock feed rated 10 percent poor, 34 percent fair, and 56 percent good. The **availability of hay and roughage** rated 25 percent short, 71 percent adequate, and 4 percent surplus. **Utilization of stubble fields for grazing** was reported as 53 percent unused, 25 percent limited, 16 percent moderate, and 6 percent extensive.

IOWA PRELIMINARY WEATHER SUMMARY, MARCH. 2007

Provided by State Climatologist Harry Hillaker

General Summary. March temperatures averaged 42.1 degrees or 6.1 degrees above normal while precipitation averaged 2.86 inches or 0.65 inches above normal. This ranks as the 12th warmest and 25th wettest March among 135 years of state records.

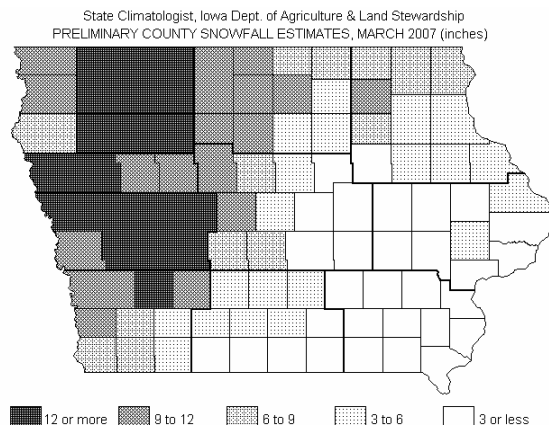
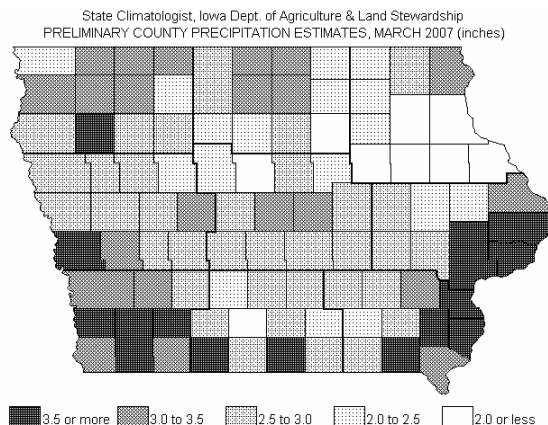
Temperatures. The month began with cold weather as temperatures averaged below normal for 6 of the first 7 days of March. Daytime highs were only in the teens in northwest Iowa on the 3rd while morning lows dipped to -6 degrees at Cresco on the 6th. Daily high temperatures climbed above freezing at Spencer on only 6 days from January 12 to March 7; however, highs have been above freezing on every day since March 8.

Statewide temperatures edged above normal on the 8th and fell back below normal only twice for the remainder of the month (16th & 17th). The first 80 degrees temperature of the year was recorded at Keosauqua on the 13th, Iowa's earliest 80 degrees reading since March 7, 2000. The final 11 days of the month all averaged at least ten degrees above normal with Sioux City recording the highest temperature with 84 degrees on the 26th. This was Iowa's highest March temperature since Des Moines reached 87 degrees on March 26, 1991. Overall this was the warmest March since 2000.

Heating Degree Day Totals. Home heating requirements, as estimated by heating degree day totals, averaged 21% less than normal and 20% less than last March. So far this heating season (since July 1, 2006) heating requirements are running 4% less than normal but 7% more than last season at this time.

Precipitation. The month definitely came in like a lion with a major blizzard striking western and northwestern Iowa on the 1st. Snowfall amounts of 12 inches or more were common over much of west central and northwest Iowa. Greatest amounts were reported from Harlan (18.0 inches) and Carroll (17.5 inches). Thunderstorms produced amazing snow fall rates of 2 to 3 inches per hour during the morning of the 1st, especially in west central Iowa. Wind gusts of 40 to 50 mph persisted from the 1st through the 3rd, along with continued snow showers, to produce considerable blowing and drifting of snow. This resulted in the closure of Interstate 80 between West Des Moines and Council Bluffs for about 48 hours. Snowfall amounts decreased rapidly to the east of Interstate 35 with amounts of only an inch or less in far southeastern Iowa. The March 1 blizzard, combined with very heavy snow from another storm on February 23-25, to produce a snow cover of 20 to 30 inches over much of northern Iowa. The last remnant of this snow cover, centered over Mitchell County, melted on the 22nd. The weather pattern became much quieter after the blizzard with no widespread precipitation again until the 20th. The final 12 days of the month, however, saw frequent shower and thunderstorm activity. Monthly precipitation totals varied from 1.18 inches at Independence to 4.65 inches at De Witt.

Severe Weather. The year's first severe thunderstorms developed during the evening of the 21st and into the early morning hours of the 22nd with large hail or high winds reported from 25 counties, including one tornado at Sewal in Wayne County. Finally, the last evening of the month brought large hail or high winds to 34 counties, including at least one tornado in Delaware County.



March Weather Summary For Iowa Agricultural Statistics Service
Prepared by AWIS, Inc.

STATION	AIR TEMPERATURE				PRECIPITATION			HDD TOT	HDD DFN	DAYS OF 32 COLD	DAYS OF 28 COLD
	HI	LO	AVG	DFN	TOTAL	DFN	DAYS				
	North West District										
Estherville	80	-1	38	9	2.35	0.50	10	828	-257	16	11
Sioux Center	79	2	42	8	4.19	2.27	7	716	-247	17	10
Spencer	82	-4	39	8	3.20	1.30	6	801	-216	18	11
Spirit Lake	79	3	39	10	2.61	0.85	7	799	-75	16	13
North Central District											
Britt	78	-1	36	4	2.72	0.88	9	903	-89	21	17
Humboldt	78	1	38	5	2.46	0.43	8	828	-170	19	18
Mason City	81	0	37	6	2.70	0.70	11	857	-185	19	13
Osage	80	-2	36	4	2.15	0.05	9	906	-47	21	18
North East District											
Decorah	81	-3	38	6	3.47	1.58	10	818	-165	20	17
Dubuque	79	4	40	7	1.99	-0.90	10	759	-210	16	13
Elkader	81	2	38	5	1.35	-0.79	8	840	26	19	19
Fayette	80	0	37	5	2.10	-0.01	10	858	-125	19	18
Waterloo	82	4	41	7	1.28	-1.02	11	759	-197	16	14
West Central District											
Carroll	79	5	41	7	2.11	-0.12	13	742	-211	19	18
Castana	79	8	43	7	2.70	0.57	10	685	-302	16	14
Guthrie Center	80	2	42	7	2.86	0.41	9	722	-186	19	15
Harlan	79	6	43	7	2.76	0.65	10	670	-289	18	14
Jefferson	80	4	41	7	3.22	0.99	13	742	-211	19	19
Logan	79	3	44	9	3.05	1.01	10	646	-251	19	11
Rockwell City	79	3	40	5	2.01	0.12	9	776	-151	19	17
Sac City	80	4	40	8	2.50	0.18	8	776	-216	19	18
Sioux City	84	1	43	8	3.02	1.06	11	669	-238	16	10
Central District											
Boone	80	0	40	6	3.11	0.80	12	755	-169	19	19
Des Moines	82	6	46	9	2.10	-0.23	13	607	-253	14	8
Grundy Center	81	4	39	7	1.99	-0.24	8	793	-205	19	17
Marshalltown	81	6	42	8	2.96	0.57	11	716	-225	16	14
Newton	82	5	42	6	1.88	-0.35	11	725	-162	19	15
Perry	80	3	41	7	2.84	0.83	14	736	-213	19	17
Toledo	80	6	40	7	3.05	0.79	10	762	-194	19	18
East Central District											
Cedar Rapids	79	6	42	8	2.58	0.26	12	698	-218	15	13
Davenport	78	10	44	8	5.47	3.22	14	643	-231	16	12
Iowa City	80	8	44	7	3.04	0.68	12	652	-179	15	12
Lowden	80	6	41	7	4.22	1.68	14	756	-152	19	18
Maquoketa	78	7	39	6	3.62	1.34	13	791	-156	19	18
Muscatine	80	9	45	8	4.57	1.86	13	624	-377	16	11
South West District											
Atlantic	80	6	46	11	2.22	-0.07	10	600	-311	16	11
Clarinda	81	3	45	9	4.40	1.95	12	627	-246	18	13
Glenwood	80	8	46	9	3.93	1.88	10	590	-249	18	11
Red Oak	81	1	45	7	3.62	1.36	11	614	-190	17	12
Sidney	80	9	46	8	3.37	1.06	10	591	-237	17	12
South Central District											
Allerton	78	7	45	8	3.38	1.07	11	626	-454	18	15
Beaconsfield	79	8	44	8	3.13	0.90	10	638	-230	17	14
Chariton	81	5	44	7	2.81	0.49	15	655	-204	19	17
Indianola	82	6	44	7	3.21	1.02	14	657	-203	18	15
Leon	81	8	46	9	2.77	0.47	14	599	-258	19	16
South East District											
Bloomfield	77	10	45	6	2.88	0.31	17	616	-170	19	14
Burlington	81	13	49	11	3.50	0.65	13	502	-312	13	8
Ottumwa	80	8	46	9	2.54	0.26	14	584	-248	14	11
Washington	79	8	44	5	3.80	1.46	12	668	-288	18	17

Precipitation (rain, melted snow or ice) in inches. Precipitation Days = Days with precipitation of 0.01 inch or more. Air Temperatures in Degrees Fahrenheit.
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ST. RM 833, DES MOINES IA 50309. POSTMASTER, SEND ADDRESS CHANGES
TO IA CROPS & WEATHER, C/O SD AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS, PO BOX
5068 SIOUX FALLS SD 57117